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ABSTRACT

This publication addresses the practical and strategic responsibilities that go with the position of board chair when both the chair and the chief executive are determined to raise the bar for their board as a corporate body. While the chief executive is primarily responsible for leading and managing the institution, the chair of the board is primarily responsible for leading and managing the board. This publication does not address the chair's responsibility for presidential selection and departure, but it does discuss the four key responsibilities of the board chair: (1) assess the board's strengths and weaknesses and devise a plan to meet any needs; (2) clarify and adhere to mutual expectations and goals with the chief executive; (3) plan and conduct effective board meetings; and (4) ensure that the board is well informed about and engaged with the institution's needs and issues. (SLD)

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BOARD BASICS

THE CHAIR AND THE PRESIDENT

THE BOARD CHAIR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A Basic Guide for Board Chairs of Independent Institutions

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BY RICHARD T. INGRAM

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ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNING BOARDS OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Richard T. Ingram

Richard T. Ingram has been president of AGB since 1992, having previously served for many years as its executive vice president. He has been a trustee of two private colleges, an insurance company, and an independent preparatory school and continues to serve on the board of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa. He has consulted with many national nonprofit organizations and has taught at the high school and college levels.

Tom has conducted over 100 workshops for the governing boards of public and private higher education institutions since 1975 and has written extensively on trustee education and board development, board-president relationships and leadership, and other governance matters. Among his recent publications are *Presidential and Board Assessment in Higher Education*, *Effective Trusteeship*, and *Governing Independent [Public] Colleges and Universities: A Handbook for Trustees, Chief Executives and Other Campus Leaders*. Tom holds degrees from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Maryland, College Park.

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The *Board Basics* Series provides information about board responsibilities in an effort to strengthen the contributions and effectiveness of trustees and governing boards. The series is intended to promote good policies and practices without necessarily representing or implying endorsement by the association or its members. Additional copies are available by calling the AGB Publications Department at 800/356-6317.

The Board Chair's Responsibilities

When a governing board is blessed with a chair who embodies the virtues of our very best trustees and a chief executive who articulates a clear vision for the institution that the chair can share and enthusiastically support, a powerful synergy results. This publication explores some of the extraordinary responsibilities of the board chair of an independent college or university.

The chief executive is primarily responsible for leading and managing the institution, and the board chair is primarily responsible for leading and managing the board. But they both are responsible for educating and developing the board so that it will be effective. Consciously helping one another to meet these responsibilities can create valuable opportunities to improve the board's performance and, consequently, to advance institutional progress. The keys are agreeing on who has primary responsibility for what and knowing when to think, plan, and act jointly. In fact, few relationships are studied more closely by trustees than the relationship between these two leaders—and for good reason. Groups respond enthusiastically to leaders when they perceive them to be on the same page and understand their complementary yet distinctive responsibilities.

This publication is not intended to be treatise on the exercise of leadership or the qualities of successful leaders. Rather, it addresses the practical and strategic responsibilities that go with the position of board chair when both the chair and chief executive are determined to raise the bar for their board as a corporate body. This calls for an extraordinary individual who, with his or her chief executive, truly wants an informed, engaged, and committed governing board.

Among many ceremonial and other substantive functions in the board chair's job description are these four responsibilities:

1. Assess the board's strengths and weaknesses with the president and devise a plan to address apparent needs.
2. Clarify and adhere to mutual expectations and goals with the chief executive.
3. Plan and conduct effective board meetings.
4. Ensure that the board is well informed about and engaged with the institution's issues and needs.

This publication does not address the chair's considerable responsibilities in presidential selection and departure. Though helping the new chief executive begin a successful tenure falls very much on the chair's shoulders, as does the business of dealing with early signs that it may be time for a president to move on, space limitations preclude addressing them here. Other AGB publications, including titles in the *Board Basics* series, are available on these subjects.

We begin with some commendable policies and practices bearing on the chair's leadership position, especially the importance of succession planning and related matters that have implications for certain board bylaws.

Setting the Stage for the Chair's Leadership

The ideal chair of an independent college or university is usually, but not always, an obvious choice. By evidence of his or her personal style and past commitment, the individual who holds the trustees' and chief executive's respect and admiration should be apparent. Less perceptible, of course, will be clear evidence that he or she has capacity to lead and to work effectively with the chief executive.

The chair need not be the board's most consistently generous financial donor, though the capacity for commitment to philanthropic generosity is an essential consideration. It is an accepted premise in the academy that such a matter always should be tempered by the qualifying notion of "according to his or her means." But the reality is that the board chair sets the standard of personal giving and fund-raising efforts for all other trustees and that capacity *and willingness* to give matters.

THE IDEAL CHAIR OF AN INDEPENDENT COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY IS USUALLY, BUT NOT ALWAYS, AN OBVIOUS CHOICE.

Deciding who is an appropriate successor to the current chair often is a challenging and difficult process. This responsibility falls to the committee on trustees in concert with the incumbent board chair. It follows, however, that the chief executive should have a voice in assessing candidates because the relationship between these leaders must be built on mutual respect, trust, and confidence. This is particularly the case when there is widespread sentiment within the board that the chief executive's leadership and performance are satisfactory. Ideally, after all, the board chair and president should want to work closely with one another. With regard to the sensitive matter of presidential consultation, one very experienced and articulate board chair puts it this way:

> *When it comes to the selection of a new chair, the president must be held at arm's length by the process. This must be seen as a selection made by the board in the best interests of the institution. The president doesn't have a vote and certainly not a veto. The president must be informed and his views on candidates known, but the successful candidate cannot and must not be seen as "the president's choice." While compatibility with the president almost always is going to be a criterion, there may be occasions when the board leadership wishes to set a new or different tone in board-president relations. This is a tricky and sensitive issue....*

Succession planning is made easier when the board practices a regular and sensible rotation of trustees among the board officers and committee chairs. One university bestows the title of "vice chair" on all standing committee chairs and rotates these individuals on a reasonable schedule—thus, no single vice chair is heir apparent. Although this is an uncommon practice in independent higher education, and apparently works well for this university, the new board chair should not necessarily be required to have been a vice chair. *All* board members should be considered in light of the board's and institution's needs and circumstances. The review process should comprise multiple criteria; it sensibly *begins* with those trustees currently in leadership positions.

Certain bylaw provisions concerning board leadership work better than others. The goal is to provide for reasonable flexibility and balance along these lines:

- Renewal of the terms and slate of all board officers, including the chair, should be reviewed annually by the committee on trustees. The following bylaw wording may be helpful, particularly with regard to the position of chair: "The chair shall serve for renewable one-year terms and shall ordinarily serve for at least three consecutive years, but not more than five consecutive years." (Note use of the word "ordinarily.")

AS IN ALL AREAS OF ACADEMIC TRUSTEESHIP, THERE NEEDS TO BE A BALANCE BETWEEN EXTREMES WITH REGARD TO THE APPROPRIATE PERIOD OF CHAIR LEADERSHIP.

As in all areas of academic trusteeship, there needs to be a balance between extremes with regard to the appropriate period of chair leadership. One extraordinary chair of a liberal arts college served for 17 years. Was this really a good thing for the institution? As an alumnus who cared deeply about his college and was one of its top donors, this chair thought he should be regarded as an exception to the rule. But his long tenure surely denied others the opportunity to be board leaders and inadvertently risked dampening trustee motivation and commitment. There is a time to be chair and a time to go. Knowing what makes sense and is in the institution's best interests is a difficult judgment to make, and the incumbent chair and the president who work effectively together can easily get too comfortable when tenure extends too long.

At the same time, however, many trustees and chief executives lament that appropriate successors to the chair are not readily obvious. The person who once was thought to be a logical candidate turns out to have been merely a "good idea at the time." Early judgments sometimes prove to be wrong. Chief executives change, as do institutional needs and aspirations. "Automatic" succession planning is not a good practice.

Indeed, the lack of an obvious successor to the incumbent chair is probably symptomatic of a larger set of problems bearing on the board's membership and level of commitment. It is not uncommon for an incumbent chair to serve until such time as the matter is resolved in the best interest of the board and institution.

- Having a single vice chair is the norm in independent higher education, but bylaw provisions should not bind the board to select the incumbent vice chair as the new chair. This practice may be a longstanding institutional tradition, but flexibility on this matter is essential. Thus, this suggested provision: "The vice chair shall serve for renewable one-year terms and ordinarily shall serve for at least two consecutive years, but not more than three consecutive years."

- The board chair should chair the executive committee and be an ex-officio member of all other standing committees. It is especially important that he or she be an active participant at meetings of the committee on trustees (along with the chief executive). Bylaw provisions should provide for these practices.

The Chair's Primary Responsibilities

The ideal board chair should be willing and able to work with the chief executive to develop a plan that contains explicit goals to help the board reach a higher level of performance and to devote the necessary time and energy to implement the plan. Thus, the first of the chair's four responsibilities is to assess the current board's strengths and weaknesses, first with the chief executive, then with the committee on trustees or governance committee, and ultimately with the board itself.

1. Assess the board's needs and develop a plan. All boards go through cycles of high motivation and lethargy; groups rise only to the level of performance expected of them as articulated by their leaders. Even a board that functions well can do better. The chair's job is to lead, motivate, and enable a group of high-achieving *individuals* to function *as a board*. A board that is truly engaged in framing and resolving the strategic issues that confront the institution is much more likely to be motivated, to have trustees that are satisfied in their trusteeships, and to be generous in its philanthropy and commitment to fund-raising.

Among the challenges, of course, is to ensure that the board is engaged in strategic and governance matters—not institutional management. Charting that course is the joint responsibility of the chair and president. It is fulfilled by ensuring that the quality of committee and board agendas remains high and by seizing opportunities to motivate trustees through ad hoc assignments and special task forces. To be sure, having capable and committed members is among the prerequisites for an effective board. Assembling such a board is the consequence of having strategies to find and recruit the right individuals through enlightened policies, practices, and processes. The delicate process of clarifying standards of trustee commitment and performance and disengaging board members who cannot meet them is part of the equation. The board chair should have a substantial voice, with the chief executive, on these matters.

The board chair and president who are determined to articulate new standards of trustee and board performance need to set aside time to think and plan together. Start with a careful reading of the *Board Basics* booklet "Committee on Trustees," by E.B. Wilson. Then share your respective views on questions such as these:

- Are trustee attendance and quality of participation in committee and board meetings satisfactory? Is the board responsive to specific requests for assistance? Are our committee chairs really committed to their leadership responsibilities? Are trustees making financial donations at levels reasonably near their presumed capacity? Do trustees feel a sense of satisfaction from their meetings? Are they enthusiastically engaged with the strategic issues and choices confronting the institution?

- Do we have the array of talent and experience necessary for the board to meet its corporate and strategic responsibilities (including but beyond financial and investment matters)? Does our board have an appropriate balance of alumni and nonalumni members? Do we have reasonable balance of gender and minority groups? Is the committee on trustees (or the governance committee) functioning effectively?

- Are the trustees effectively oriented to the history and uniqueness of our institution? Do they really understand the board's broad corporate responsibilities? Are candidates clearly apprised of what is expected of them before they accept the invitation to stand for nomination? Do we ask enough of our trustees at and between committee and board

meetings? Does the board support the responsibility of the committee on trustees to assess trustee performance against standards they (or our predecessors) have adopted and upon which we have agreed?

- Should we adopt the practice of reserving a few minutes at the end of at least every other board meeting to discuss how members feel about the meeting agenda, issues, and supporting materials? Do members suggest ideas for future meeting agendas?

- Is our board too large? Too small? Are the frequency, length, and format of board meetings related to committee work satisfactory to meet our corporate responsibilities?

Other questions along these lines will more precisely fit the mission, scope, and uniqueness of your college or university. The point is, the chair and president need to look for evidence of commitment and dysfunction and arrive at an assessment: On what dimensions are we particularly weak and particularly strong? Does our board need some "tweaking" around the margins, a major overhaul to address several needs, or something in between? Their joint judgment is likely to be close to the mark as a first step is shaping a strategy.

Once the board chair and president agree on the issues and needs and form a preliminary plan, it is important that they seek the help of other trustees. The committee on trustees is the most appropriate group, provided it is not itself in need of reform. The second most logical place to seek reaction and support is the executive committee, though its conduct, too, may benefit from scrutiny. The point is, other board leaders should endorse both the preliminary assessment and the prescription for change advocated by the chair and president. The general concept, not necessarily the details, then should be shared with the board. The board chair, the chief executive, and the appropriate committee chair should develop a process that will engage the board in a search for consensus on the scope of change.

Some prescribed changes, perhaps even some bylaw changes, can be implemented with minimal effort. But major changes are likely to require full board discussion to reach consensus and achieve the desired effects. Indeed, the *process* may be as important as the *outcomes*. Some board chairs, especially those who come from the ranks of large corporate enterprises, have little patience with "process." But like it or not, academic boards and culture require it.

A FRESH AND CREDIBLE PERSPECTIVE CAN BRING NEW INSIGHTS AND MOTIVATION TO BOARD WORK.

It follows that a third party's intervention may be necessary and helpful. A fresh and credible perspective can bring new insights and motivation to board work. A friendly colleague from outside the institution can observe or suggest many things the board chair or chief executive simply cannot. Indeed, the most logical process may take the form of a self-study workshop that is informed by the results of a survey of all trustees and an experienced facilitator. The goal is to engage the board in a process through which it *owns* the commitments to the change it proposes.

2. Clarify and adhere to mutual expectations and goals. Early in their relationship, a new chair and president should devote time to a discussion of mutual expectations for their joint leadership. They need to realize that their own effectiveness depends largely on the effectiveness of the other. Thus, a mutually supportive relationship is essential. Chairs and presidents need not be fast friends, but respect, trust, and confidence in one another are crucial. If these qualities are absent, one or the other should move on. The following questions can help the chair and president successfully launch their working relationship:

- What is your vision for the institution, and how can I help you make it reality?
- What are your goals for the institution and for the board for the next year?
- Is the president comfortable with the board chair (or other board members) directly communicating with senior institutional officers on any matter of interest or concern to them? What are the caveats?
- With regard to press inquiries, who should "speak for" the institution? For the board?
- Should we agree on a regular timetable for conversations about how things are going, or should we do this on an as-needed basis?
- Can we agree that we always will keep one another informed of extended absences from our respective offices and about how we can be reached in emergencies?

- How can we hold to the principle of "no surprises" as a two-way responsibility?

- Can we agree that complete candor and absolute confidentiality on any subject or issue form the foundation of our relationship and that this extends to the president's personal and family matters?

Here are some of the *expectations of board chairs* typically held by chief executives:

- Set a personal example in everything you say and do, including personal philanthropy (annual giving, comprehensive campaign, and fund-raising participation).

- Tell me what I can do to help you to lead the board.

- Bring a sense of perspective and wisdom from outside the institution.

- Grasp the big picture and help keep the board from being focused on operational management detail.

- Be a good listener, and help me predict likely board reaction to controversial proposals or undertakings.

- Foster healthy and productive debate on important issues before the board, but know my position on them beforehand.

- Before acting on an individual trustee's call for action or recommendation, please be certain it is shared by a majority of trustees.

- Be supportive but not overly protective—a loving critic.

- Be willing to take the occasional difficult trustee "to the woodshed."

- Be willing to speak candidly with trustees who too often are noncommittal.

- Protect me as much as you reasonably can from internal board politics.

- Help me interpret the board's priorities and expectations.

- Take the lead in the annual review of my performance, and give me honest feedback about my goals and work. Help me see my blind spots.

- Be my advocate on compensation adjustments to ensure fairness and comparability with peers in light of my performance.

- Run a good meeting, and encourage committee chairs to deliver good reports.

- Help me and my management team be creative with board-meeting agendas to ensure that the trustees are substantively engaged in the institution's issues.

Here are some *expectations of presidents* typically expressed by board chairs:

- Articulate a clear vision for the institution.

- Engage the board in strategic-planning issues through its committee and board meetings.

- Help the board feel less detached from the issues, concerns, and achievements facing faculty and students. Help the board understand how faculty collaboration is sought and its voice expressed and considered within the institution's governance processes.

- Hire a first-rate management team, and hold its members accountable. Delegate properly and effectively.

- Be courageous in making difficult decisions in the institution's best long-term interests.

- Trust me to keep the personal and professional challenges you share with me in absolute confidence.

- Build community and constituent support.

- Share the good and bad news with the board and me at all times. Adhere to the doctrine of no surprises that we strive to adhere to with you.

- Tell me what you would like the board or any of its members to start doing, keep doing, or stop doing.

- Tell me how I can be a better chair.

- Be a good listener, and accept constructive criticism (as you should expect of me).

3. *Conduct effective board meetings.* Presiding effectively at meetings is an art that reflects experience and personal style. Having a sense of humor and demonstrable passion for the institution and its issues helps, but the continuing challenge for the board chair (shared with the president) is to find ways to overcome the boredom caused by meeting agendas that are driven overwhelmingly by *reports* instead of *issues*. The challenge

is to plan board meetings in a way that truly engages trustees, delivers on the promise that college and university trusteeship is intellectually stimulating, and convinces trustees that their time is being used effectively.

THERE ARE NO SILVER BULLETS FOR BOARD INITIATIVES, AND THERE IS LOTS OF ROOM FOR CREATIVITY.

It is conventional wisdom that the board should accomplish most of its work through well-led committees and that committee work, in turn, should drive board meetings. But it also is important to remember that the full board should engage certain issues. A part of every board meeting should be a seminar, mini-symposium, or forum for an open and wide-ranging discussion of a key issue that is consequential to the institution's future. Such sessions may take place between committee meetings and the board meeting or be built into board meeting itself.

There are no silver bullets for board initiatives, and there is lots of room for creativity. Some board chairs and presidents report great results with mock debates, discussions on timely articles from *Trusteeship* magazine, trustee presentations on topics in their areas of expertise relevant to the college, and so on. These are in addition to guest speakers including faculty, student leaders, and alumni who are doing interesting things.

Occasional use of ad hoc committees that may include a mix of trustees, staff, academic leaders, and students, for example, is another good practice. Many chairs have found their boards appreciate the practice of setting aside one meeting each year with a "retreat format" and focused purpose. Organizing small delegations of board members to educational conferences also is motivational.

The chair should encourage substantive and concise reports from committee chairs, except when issues or recommendations require fuller discussion. Other obvious expectations of the chair have to do with the overly loquacious trustee and his or her opposite, the trustee who is too reticent to speak unless called upon. Remember: It is not always the silent trustee who has nothing say; indeed, the trustee who needs to be urged to speak often has useful insights.

The chair should be alert to real or possible trustee conflicts of interest; other board officers and the board's audit committee also need to be vigilant in this regard. There should be clear standing policies and procedures governing trustee disclosure of possible conflicts and how they are to be handled. Board members look to their chair to be even-handed and inclusive, but also firm and consistent. The chair always can express his or her opinion on an issue, and can make certain that trustees know where the president stands on controversial issues, but the timing of such revelation is important—perhaps better late in a discussion than too early.

It is a universal practice to have an executive session at the end of all board meetings, whether confidential business is anticipated or not. These sessions with only the trustees and president in the room carry practical and symbolic value. On the practical side, routinely providing for executive sessions enables trustees to raise any issue they otherwise would avoid because of the presence of staff or students. Symbolically, they convey to everyone connected with the institution that the trustees and president recognize that it is they who ultimately are responsible for the institution as a whole. All boards benefit from having at least a few minutes of private time with their president; indeed, the president occasionally may need to raise a confidential matter that has arisen since the board's last meeting.

Personal integrity and courage are the hallmarks of an outstanding chair. He or she always is committed to protecting the institution's integrity and progress. Someone once quipped that "our chair's armor was superb for parade purposes, but not for battle," reminding us that the chair periodically may have to be willing and able to stand his or her ground and exercise personal courage in the face of fire.

There is room for humor in the presiding function, too. Someone once described a board meeting as "a huddle of quarterbacks," where the most precious trait "is the ability to yawn with your mouth closed." Board chairs can help keep trustees from taking themselves too seriously, even when the issues being discussed may indeed be very serious. A quip that suggests the need for more humility in boardrooms appears in the 1971 *Standard Manual* of the London Institute of Directors:

And while the Great Ones repair to their dinner,
The Secretary stays, growing thinner and thinner,
Racking his brains to record and report
What he thinks they will think that they ought to have thought.

4. Keep the board informed and engaged. How does a chair keep the board motivated and stimulated, responsive and responsible? Where do his or her initiatives begin and end relative to those of the president?

The chair and president are wise to guard against depending on the executive committee too much. Such dependency inadvertently conveys the perception that there are two classes of trustees: those who are on the executive committee and those who are not, those who are privy to information and decision-making authority and those who are not. Indeed, a board whose executive committee routinely meets more often than the full board may create an underlying problem with board morale.

The results of hundreds of written self-studies and workshops conducted by AGB reveal much higher satisfaction with performance on financial-management and investment responsibilities than on academic-policy and program-oversight responsibilities. This is ironic—the real business of a college or university is its academic programs—but not surprising. Yes, governing boards are much more knowledgeable about and comfortable with financial matters and are commonly discouraged from being too inquisitive about academic matters. But issues related to the academic program and faculty work—even though generally considered to be the exclusive purview of the faculty—often are discussed in today's boardrooms, as they should be.

A 2002 AGB book on the board's responsibilities for the academic program should be required reading for the board chair and members of the academic affairs committee. *Strategic Leadership in Academic Affairs: Clarifying the Board's Responsibilities*, by Richard L. Morrill, president emeritus of the University of Richmond, discusses the various issues the committee and, through it, the board itself should appropriately engage. Among the topics the book addresses are the culture of academic decision making, the structure and evaluation of academic programs, strategic analysis of the academic budget, faculty collaboration in governance, and tenure and appointment policies.

The joint assessment of the chair and president will generate many other good ideas for future committee and board meetings, a clearer understanding of the board's corporate responsibilities, an appreciation for what is expected of individual board members, desirable bylaw changes, and much more.

In sum, these good policies are suggested for board chair consideration:

- The board should set aside time every three or four years to take a comprehensive look at itself and how it functions.
- Most board members should be able to articulate which of the college's major academic programs are strongest and which are the weakest (on such dimensions as enrollment, reputation, student performance outcomes, graduate satisfaction, and career paths of graduates).
- The board should have a clear set of responsibilities articulated in its bylaws as well as a written set of expectations to guide individual board members. These expectations serve as benchmarks for trustee performance reviews by the committee on trustees.
- If there a sense that a majority of board members feel removed from issues concerning the institution's academic program, faculty, and student life, the board chair and president should explore ways to remedy any sense of detachment—without inviting micromanagement, intruding into curriculum details, or undermining the chief executive's standing with the faculty and other constituents.

GOOD THINGS WILL HAPPEN WHEN A BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT HAVE A STRONG RELATIONSHIP.

THE CHAIR'S LEADERSHIP

Good things will happen when a board chair and president have a strong relationship and the chair understands the responsibilities that stem from their work in assessing the board's needs within the context of the institution's needs. Experience shows that once a plan has been set in motion a minimum of three to five years is required to help a governing board move from being ceremonial and honorific to engaged and participatory. The board chair, together with a chief executive who really wants such a board, is key to raising the bar and to establishing standards of trustee performance evaluation and comportment. The college or university and everyone connected with it are the beneficiaries.

More than any other single trustee, the board chair has the opportunity to help the president and board succeed. He or she has the capacity to lift some of the many burdens that are part of the chief executive's portfolio of responsibilities. The board chair-president relationship works best when the chair can do the following:

- Be a partner (a trusted confidant, friend, loving critic) but not the president. The institution needs only one president and one board chair.
- Be accessible.
- Keep the board focused on strategic issues and long-term policy matters.
- Avoid dysfunctional politeness with board members and with the president.
- Help bring the right talent to the board through the committee on trustees.
- Articulate expectations of trustee service, and implement processes for periodic board self-assessment and for assessing the performance of individual trustees.
- Ensure that new board members receive an effective orientation program to the institution and to their trusteeships. Participate in it.
- Ensure that a process is in place to assess the performance of the president. The process should emphasize annual and strategic goals coupled with assurance of appropriate compensation adjustments commensurate with performance.
- Set a superb example in personal philanthropy and fund-raising leadership.
- Keep abreast of and be articulate about the major issues and trends in independent higher education affecting your institution.

Board chairs who follow such a course will contribute to a term of office that is filled with the accomplishment and joy that can come only from leading others to higher levels of achievement in service to their college or university.

Resources

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BASICS

This publication is part of *Board Basics*, an AGB series devoted to strengthening the effectiveness of governing boards and trustees. Board Basics comprises eight topic clusters—The Fundamentals, Effective Committees, Financial Matters, Foundation Relations, Fund-Raising, Board Leadership, Strategic Decisions, and The Chair and the President—each of which contains several booklets. Several assumptions underlie the series:

- The responsibilities of academic trusteeship are often ambiguous. Trustees need concise, accessible, and focused information to help them carry out their complex fiduciary and stewardship responsibilities.
- Basic principles of trusteeship remain constant across higher education, regardless of institutional type, size, and mission. The series highlights these general principles to provide trustees with a core of knowledge they can apply to their individual institutions.
- The series addresses the distinguishing characteristics of academic trusteeship, especially as it differs in scope, substance, and focus from corporate directorships and other board service.

AGB and the authors welcome comments and suggestions for improving this publication and others in the series. Call the AGB Publications Department at 800/356-6317 or visit our Web site at www.agb.org for more information.

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